PREFACE

J22 This Handbook on the Caucasus has been prepared at the Language and Communication Research Center of Columbia University in fulfilment of a contractual obligation with the Human Relations Area Files. Though only certain of the topics covered by the Project were part of the general aims of the Research Center, it was felt that we could undertake the responsibility for preparing additional sections [114] since Dr. Aert H. Kuipers, one of the very few specialists on the Caucasian languages, was a Research Associate of the Center, and because of the presence on the Columbia teaching staff of three scholars whose specialities included various aspects of Caucasian studies: Dr. Bernhard Geiger, Dr. Tibor Halasi-Kun, and Dr. Karl H. Menges.

The contract was originally to run from February 16, 1955 until April 15, 1956; however, due to administrative difficulties, the signing of the contract was delayed, and the staffing of the project could not be arranged before the end of April 1955. That in spite of the shortness of the time this amount of information could be assembled on this highly complex and relatively unknown area, was possible only through the preparation and knowledge brought to the project by the principal investigators and the collaborators.